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ABSTRACT

How peace can be "enforced" on an entire generation through education is discussed. The goals of education for peace are several. For example, it would enable people to cope with issues of modern society, help them develop an understanding of different cultures, and prepare them to actively participate in the governmental policy-making process. To become peace loving, a person must go through a series of socialization steps, e.g., reduction of aggression, elimination of general tension, courage to deal with conflicts. Education for peace has many general characteristics. For example, it must be pluralistic and involve every sector of the community. There should be various educational experiments apart from the traditional school. The classroom environment needs to undergo radical changes. Teaching methods need to encourage student participation and interaction as well as the use of a variety of teaching media. The shortest way to the achievement of the full objectives of peace education is to have community agencies participate in a seminar on the promotion of international understanding. The content of such a seminar is described. (RM)

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EDUCATION FOR PEACE: WHAT IT ENTAILS

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EDUCATION FOR PEACE: WHAT IT ENTAILS

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Education is derived from the Latin words e and duco meaning out of and lead. The basic meaning of education is a process by which we lead people, hopefully, from ignorance to knowledge. Unfortunately, people can also be led from clarity of mind to confusion. Much depends on the educator and the educational system itself.

In general, education is commonly defined as a process through which factors and skills are learned while abilities and attitudes are developed. More specifically, education denotes the methods by which knowledge, culture, and values are passed from one generation to another. A truly educated person is developed physically, mentally, emotionally, morally and socially. Schools staffed by professional teachers are responsible for authorized education, although the family and many other agencies within the nation play an important part. Individual teachers often exercise great influence which may not always be good.

Peace is derived from the Latin word pax, pacis meaning reconcilation, agreement, harmony or tranquility. The fundamental purpose of peace is for two or more persons to live together in harmony where mutual love, respect and assistance become dominant characteristics. So peace is something that should not only be desirable but should also be literally "enforced" upon everybody without exception. Of course, since peace consists of attitudes that grow and develop from the "inside" of a person, it cannot be imposed on anyone from an outside source. Peace, however, can be "enforced" on an entire generation through the kind of educational set up that would enable a whole nation to

develop peaceful attitudes from the inside naturally and automatically.

GOALS AND PURPOSES

Throughout the centuries the goals and purposes of education differed considerably. The Greeks looked at education as a means to develop a well-rounded personality both mentally and physically. The Romans considered the vir bonus, the virtuous man, as the sole purpose of the schools. Hence, children were expected to grow up into adults who were honest from every aspect. The early Christians, under monastic guidance, stressed the salvation of the soul as the real major purpose of the schools. This was based on the assumption that nothing would benefit a person if such a person were to lose his soul in spite of a socially successful life. The scholastic period considered the development of rationality, often known as common sense, as the indispensable element for the solution of any human problem.

The Renaissance, aware of the biblical injunction—the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak—stressed the importance of education as the absolute means for the release of fear. This has essentially promoted the concept of education for courage. For the last several decades, the United States of America has advocated that education was the best instrument to secure money. The slogan, which was heard often on both radio and television, stated: to get a good job get a good education.

Actions speak louder than words. In spite of the high ideals promoted by the various educational systems throughout the centuries, human beings still feel insecure. The future is well entrenched in uncertainty. The reason is simple. Everyone, regardless of his background culture and nationality, yearns to live in a society which is characterized by harmony, tranquility and

peace. If this is the proven basic need of every human being on earth, then anything the schools do which is not directly related to this proven basic human need could be termed irrelevant. This means that the millions, and possibly billions, of dollars invested in education are destined to go to waste for all practical purposes as time rolls on.[1]

The goals and purposes of education for peace are several. Here is a list:

1. To enable people to cope with surmounting pressures brought about by modern living in a fast changing society.
2. To develop an understanding of people with diversity of cultures and backgrounds.
3. To prepare an entire generation to participate actively in the governmental policy-making process.
4. To enlighten students in the various approaches that could be taken in dealing with actual conflicts; this would involve the use of one's knowledge, insights, and values as well as skills.
5. To organize for everyone concerned Peace Research careers and peace-making roles at both the governmental and non-governmental levels.
6. To encourage involvement in respective political systems through a better understanding of economic and social trends.
7. To promote the study of the inter-relationship between responsible groups—notably the state, church, school and family.
8. To implement a relevant curriculum that would prepare the adult members of the future society to solve problems independently.

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[1] cfr. Carlton E. Beck et alii. Education for Relevance: The Schools and Social Change. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1968.

All of these points are geared toward the understanding of key issues which consist of interrelated values of war prevention, international economic stability, social justice and world-wide ecological protection. In addition, the best available data of science and technology should be utilized to stabilize the body of the world politics in an altruistic fashion, to promote a relevant education that is capable of preventing war and of promoting peace, and to develop a full understanding of such factors as population, hunger and violence.

MEANING AND MISCONCEPTIONS

Before forming a clear concept of what constitutes education for peace, we should bear in mind some misconceptions in this area.

Education for peace does not consist (1) of a series of lectures exhorting listeners to lead a good life; (2) of a set of courses in human relations offered by a university for graduation; (3) of conventions organized by civic organizations whose sole purpose is to obliterate war; (4) of teaching and promoting a traditional set of moral values; (5) of trying to create a utopian society which enjoys the utmost perfection in laws, politics and all social relations; (6) of training a society to become willfully and voluntarily subservient to the state; (7) of indoctrinating the bulk of the population with certain philosophical and religious beliefs; (8) of building a peaceful society while ignoring completely the past history of human conflicts which led constantly to hatred and wars.

On the contrary, education for peace means (1) the capability to solve every problem one encounters without resorting to violence; (2) the determination to succeed in life not at the expense of others; (3) the full

control of man's aggressiveness in social relations; (4) the development of individual responsibility that would enable an entire nation to become self-sufficient; (5) the promotion of cultural understanding for a better comprehension of human behavior; (6) the implementation of a philosophical system that puts top priority on the universal welfare of mankind; (7) the re-structure of educational priorities so as to make peaceful living the most important element of the educational process; (8) organization of a seminar in the promotion of international understanding for all responsible groups of society: politicians, lawyers, physicians, businessmen, school administrations and so on. An example of such a seminar is outlined carefully toward the end of this chapter.

The concept of peace is a very old one. Probably it originated from the field of religion which tended to look at peace as "a life of legitimate enjoyment" where people are free from both the struggle for life and the hostility among humans. Nowadays, the pacifist movement everywhere seems to have assumed the responsibility for the eventual promotion of peace on earth. Its goals seem to be as old as the human race itself; fraternity, charity and reconciliation. The method of approach is based on the creation of a new man through a possible change of heart. Hence, education for peace becomes a question of innovation in the physical structure of the individual. The pacifist movement concentrates on the development of correct mental attitudes which are continuously being affected by the environment of an aggressive and destructive society. The members of the pacifist movement are merely motivated by their compassion for others, even when not personally linked to them, and by their sensitivity of the suffering of others. The only flaw that seems to exist with such a movement lies in the apparent reality that the pacifists do

not tend to admit the empirical fact of a world which consists dialectically of peace and war, love and hatred, construction and destruction as well as of life and death.[2]

Independently of religion and the pacifist movement, a new scientific group which refers to itself as "peace research" has been established. This sociologically oriented group conceives peace as one of the possible forms of social conflict which is non-destructive and which is capable to resolve permanent conflicts in a fruitful and beneficial way. This peace research group became conspicuous the moment the super powers began to produce weapons able to exterminate the whole human race. Consequently, the need for an education for peace became increasingly the focus of attention. Short-term and long-term educational programs began to be planned based on the problems of the socialization of the individual in a world of diversity. Here, toleration stands as a top virtue.

Peace research groups feel, in general, a certain degree of obligation to provide us with practical peace theories which deal directly with education for peace. Such theories provide us with an educational concept that tends to change radically the emotional aspect of social behavior so that a human being will arise who is peaceable—capable of peace of his own free will. Of course, even here, difficulties arise in characterizing the mental behavior of the peaceable man. Is he a person who represents a uniform type of a peaceful being, a harmless robot functioning after a program made by sociologists or psychologists who are in the hands of a political or economic power?

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[2] cfr. Robert N. Bellah and Philip E. Hammond. Varieties of Civil Religion. Harper and Row Religious Books, San Francisco, 1981.

HOMO SAPEINS BELLICOSUS

From historical evidences, we cannot turn the homo sapiens bellicosus into a future homo sapiens pacatus over night. The peaceable human needs to go through a series of steps for the kind of socialization needed to eliminate war as a means to solve conflicts. Such steps could be termed as (1) Reduction of aggression; (2) Elimination of general tension; (3) Satisfaction of elementary needs; (4) Freedom of movement; (5) Toleration of frustration; (6) Courage to deal with conflicts; (7) Boost of the ego; and (8) Enjoyment of life.[3]

1. Reduction of Aggression

Eminent ethnologists and psychologists have confirmed that germs of aggression are imbued in the human nature itself the way we know it. If that is the case, then it is up to education to let us know to what extent such aggression exists and what steps could be taken to reduce it. A first common step seems to lie in the implementation of a philosophy that makes the universal welfare of mankind a top priority.

2. Elimination of General Tension

Once this kind of philosophy is implemented, education for peace will become a very important tool in creating a social atmosphere where the level of general tensions could be kept considerably low. The selection and formation of our educators, at every stage of learning, will be very crucial. New criteria for the employment of teachers need to be formulated to meet basic needs in this regard.

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[3] cfr. Lester D. Crow and Alice Crow. Human Development and Learning. American Book Company, New York, 1965.

3. Satisfaction of Elementary Needs

This item was already emphasized as vital by Heinrich Pestalozzi, the Swiss educator, well over a hundred years ago. In fact, it has been observed that discussions at conferences before meals are led on a significantly higher level of aggression than after meals. The basic human needs of food, water, air, and shelter must be fully safeguarded before any attempt is made to solve manifold problems that surround us everywhere.

4. Freedom of Movement

By their very nature, human beings like to roam about. Restriction of movement will immediately result in a high state of tension which is the first step to conflict. The fast changing times which are heavily affected by an almost uncontrollable inflation have forced people to diminish their space of living. Housing projects and apartments are flooding everywhere. People are no longer enjoying their gardens and their privacy of empty space where they could relax on their own territory. As a result, the growing child is being affected in various ways.

5. Toleration of Frustration

Even if a peaceful society were eventually to emerge, frustration of some kind will remain. Some psychologists even claim that frustration as such is inevitable. The inequality among human beings, which stems from looks, intelligence, and social status—to mention but a few--will remain a cause of frustration and sacrifice. An education for peace would enable the individual to master conflicts caused by frustration. In this way, one is always mentally prepared to switch habits and change work should a need arise.

6. Courage to Deal with Conflicts

Conflicts that lead to breaches of law or into destruction arise

from individuals who are incapable of resolving the minor conflicts within themselves and between others. The harsh conflicts which exist within our educational systems all over the world stem generally from the unilateral dependence between the teachers and the school authorities. The serious lack of a genuine interdependence has led to an accumulation of aggression which is, at times, resolved violently. Education for peace trains humans not only to face opposition but to deal with it courageously. The bargaining concept, which is opposed by most school administrators, is a typical example of a basic objective in peace education. Educators who oppose the bargaining concept do not have the courage to deal with conflicts.

7. Boost of the Ego

In an educational system, the boost of the ego is of paramount importance. One of the objectives of peace education is precisely to boost the individual ego for the individual's greater independence and better self-reliance. Such a boost of the ego will help safeguard the individual from jealously of every kind which makes the individual regress to that stage of early infancy when instincts and emotions have full control over the rational element of the human. Such a rational element is the only practical element that distinguishes him from the brute. The boost of the ego helps make one less dependent on a single person or group. Hence, one becomes more mature, is better equipped with attitudes of self-adaptation, and reveals to be more responsive to human needs.

8. Enjoyment of Life

Above all, education for peace stresses the importance for all human beings to love life. The fear to live "life" into an unknown future has, on a number of occasions, led many to despair and suicide. Traditional Christian

virtues, like modesty, sacrifice and self-control, become meaningful when related to a better transcendent life. In spite of a variety of propaganda, our educational systems in the world do not teach our students to enjoy life. In fact, most of the social virtues advocated in schools are rather hostile to life. They are based on life-fearing instead of life-loving—an approach that eventually arouses feelings of guilt which, in turn, generates fear and consequently hostility and hatred.

An education for peace must teach humans to look forward into the future to find acknowledgement and experience support while being healthy egoists the way explained. In addition, it must educate people to lead a life free of guilt and bad conscience and to work toward a bright and hopeful future.

At this stage we may reflect for a moment on the past history of human conflicts. During the last 500 years alone, close to 3,000 wars took place. That averages 6 wars a year. Quite embarassing to the dignity of human intelligence to say the least! Even nowadays, the idea of war as a future eventuality roams the minds of such countries as the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Israel, a number of Arab countries, Pakistan, India and several others including tribal strifes witnessed within some nations of Africa. In fact, the development of nuclear weapons is a concrete evidence of what has just been stated.[4]

Our eventual preparation for war, as Krishnamurti once explained, helps "develop in the young the military spirit". Whole nations are surrounded

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[4]cfr. Kenneth Kaunda. The Riddle of Violence. Harper and Row, Inc., San Francisco, 1981.

by an atmosphere of violence which is revealed in every sort of organized crime. This includes the suicide rate which is climbing at an alarming rate in some global areas. Insubordination is constantly leading to unrest, protests, and corruption within the family, schools, factories and the various branches of government. Juvenile delinquency, students and workers unrest became increasingly conspicuous in recent years. National strifes are the first stepping stones to international struggle commonly known as war. This explains why the preamble to the United Nations' Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) starts by saying: "Since wars begin in the minds of men it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed."

Judged from historical evidence, human beings seem to be warlike by nature. But a perfect analysis of the human nature reveals otherwise. People are born in a kind of neutral state. Strictly speaking, people at birth cannot be termed war-minded or peace-minded. As time passes, the rich potentialities inherent in the human nature itself begin to unfold. When such potentialities are systematically suffocated, then the seeds of war begin to germinate in the human mind and the individual's subconscious power. When such potentialities are given every opportunity to unfold and develop, then a creative and competitive society develops that may put an entire generation on the road to peace and prosperity.

Since World War II, the world has witnessed a rapid growth of materialism on one hand and of spiritualism on the other. The tragedy lies in the fact that there has been hardly any successful effort to coordinate these two diversified realities. Materialism has been largely responsible for rapid scientific advancement that expanded hopes for prosperity. Spiritualism has been

largely responsible for providing greater inner harmony and peace of mind. In spite of the fact that the materialistic aspect of life has proven itself a great promise for human prosperity, humanity's peace of mind has been lost because of the materialistic insistence on keeping materialism totally divorced from religion which is fully immersed in spiritualism. Religion deals directly with the internal life of man which is the seat of all virtues.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Education for peace must be pluralistic. It should be experimentally centered on community action as much as possible. Every sector of the community must be encouraged to develop its own educational skills. In addition, there should be various educational experiments apart from the traditional type of school. Such experiments could be conducted through street-academies, open-air universities, and action research centers.

Civic organizations, as well as church groups, where available, can take an active part in the development of training community centers for field workers who may specialize in helping people deal with their own problems. Such problems could involve poverty, hunger and poor health. Non-violent peace brigades could be organized as peace simulation exercises. In addition, non-violent organizations in various forms could also take place. Steps could be taken to ensure protection of human rights everywhere.[5]

The classroom environment needs to undergo some radical changes. Teaching methods need to encourage student participation and interaction as well

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[5] cfr. Thomas Buergenthal and Judith V. Torney. International Human Rights and International Education. U.S. Commission for UNESCO, Washington, D.C., 1976.

as the use of a variety of teaching media. Extra-curricular activities should also be given greater attention. Peace education requires a kind of approach that would permit a feedback. Teachers and responsible groups of the community have a great task to perform in determining the type of education that will eventually bring about a new era of peace. It is important for all teachers' associations and other educational organizations to get away from their isolated spheres and prejudices and proceed to work on a common platform of unification. All those concerned could examine critically suggestions and recommendations for peace, cooperate in the planning process of curriculum development and come out, through a consensus of opinion, with a curriculum that is flexible but universal in its applicability.

In order to understand the importance of education for peace we need simply to give a rapid glance through history. There was hardly a century in the history of humanity that went recorded as a century of peace. Human beings have been fighting each other like cats and dogs since the beginning of times.

In education for peace, the human being is taken as a unit composed of physical, psychological, social and philosophical elements. These elements are like four legs of the same table. Once one leg is off, the entire table loses balance and tips over. The physical element deals with hunger, thirst, sleep and sex. The psychological element deals with the feeling of belonging, freedom of choosing between alternatives of genuine self-expression. The social element deals with security; the need for recognition and companionship. The philosophical element deals with interpretation of events, reflection, judgement and scientific curiosity.

Education for peace would become meaningful if and when all involved agencies of society cooperate to make the world a better place of habitation.

Such agencies are found everywhere. The most important, in terms of influence, are the family, school, church and state. Other involved agencies are libraries, museums, television, radio, newspapers, to mention but a few. Each of these mentioned agencies has a major role to play. They have in common the obvious capability to germinate in society the seeds of peace or war. They all can help promote or suffocate, in various ways, freedom of movement and genuine self-expression.

NEEDED REMEDIAL ASSISTANCE

The shortest cut to the achievement of the full objectives of peace education seems to lie in having the aforementioned agencies participate in a carefully prepared seminar on the promotion of international understanding. Such a seminar could be developed in six sessions as follows:

1. Introduction

Participants are introduced to the social art of self-expression. What really counts in terms of effective relations is not "what" we say but "how" we say what we need to express and communicate. This would require a mastery of the syntax, structure and idiomatic expressions of the language of communication which is the key to world peace as will be eventually demonstrated in Chapter 14. From a brief analysis of every war that developed in history we will immediately realize that the source of every war stemmed from some lack of communication. Hence, we need to become familiar with the dimension of as many languages as possible.

2. Looking into the Future

Since the United Nations is the only instrument available that is capable of bringing all countries together, we need to have a clear concept of such an international body. Although in theory the United Nations represents

the people of all countries, in practice most of the countries in the United Nations represent only the minority which usurped power or the political party which holds the reigns of government. Also, for a better understanding of the United Nations, the foreign policy of the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as other major countries, need to be brought fully into perspective. Summarized briefly, one could say that the United States tends quite often to take the wrong steps with the right intention. On the other hand, one could equally say that the Soviet Union, on a number of instances, tends to take the right steps with the wrong motives. Some of the greatest teachers in human history need to be taken seriously into account for study and inspiration.

3. Developing Effective Relations

The problems that stem from one's background could be properly outlined and discussed. The various levels of existence—divine, angelic, human, animal, vegetal, and inanimate—the way explained by St. Thomas Aquinas, should be carefully understood for a better understanding of the sources of problems that stem from political obstacles due to a variety of abuses and manipulation of human destiny. Most governments tend to solve human problems by reducing their people to the level of machines for all practical purposes. This explains why the mathematical formula, often used by various governments to solve human problems, should be replaced by a psychological formula which recognizes the uniqueness of humanity. Ultimately, the problems that stem from the language barrier must be analyzed carefully. At times the expression used in an eastern or northern part of a country is not understood by the same natives who live in the southern or western part of the same country.

4. Strategy Planning

Future planning is important. The needs and realities created by the new space age era must be understood. When astronauts and cosmonauts went into orbit, for the first time in the history of mankind, human beings could see the entire plant with one glance. In so doing, they soon realized that the boundaries which separated one nation from another were artificially created by humans themselves. In many cases, such boundaries seem to make no sense at all. In addition, it was observed that when one country pollutes its air and water soon afterwards, the air and water of other countries become polluted too. Therefore, a new philosophy developed that viewed the entire planet as one single home for all the members of the human society. What Seneca said in the early part of the first century A.D. may likely lead to an academic revolution at the turn of the 21st century. He said there will be world peace when every person learns to look at the world and say: Omnis orbs terrarum patria mea est—the whole world is my native land.[6]

5. Education for Responsibility

The importance of philological studies should become a primary concern of every school. The news media—press, radio, and television—in every society exert great influence on people. Due to a basic lack of philological studies, people fail to understand others and to eventually communicate with others. The same word and the same expression may mean different things to different people. For example, when the word "gift" is used in English, it has a connotation of love and affection; it means present or reward. However,

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[6]cfr. Edgar Faure et alii, Learning to Be (The World of Education Today and Tomorrow), Ars Graphiques Coop Suisse,

when the same word "gift" is used in German it has a connotation of hate and detestation; in German the same word, written and pronounced the same, means poison. Improvement in social relations is imperative if people everywhere are to live in peace and security. The free movement of people is indispensable. Every restriction that deals with such a free movement is a nail in the coffin of freedom, security and peace. Passports should be issued to every law-abiding citizen with great ease. The rigomarole involved in issuing visas should be eliminated. In addition, restriction on imports and exports should be avoided unless the security and stability of the country will prove to be at stake. Also, all kinds of tariffs should be eliminated since their very existence refuses to recognize the entire planet as one home and one native land for all people.

6. Conclusion

The teacher's role in society needs to be properly explained. The teacher is expected to have a mastery of his area of specialization in order to perform his duties as a guide properly and effectively. The concept of peace could be analyzed. As the well know American preacher, Rev. Billy Graham, stated on more than one occasion, peace is a product of attitudes. It is not imposed from the outside. On the contrary, it is developed from the inside—the inner part of the human being. Last but not least, it could be demonstrated that the study and knowledge of foreign languages may serve as an important means to world stability and peace.

The above seminar could initially be given to agencies which are directly and indirectly involved with the educational process of our children. Afterwards, it could be extended to as many other sectors of the community as possible. The benefits that will be reaped as a result will eventually prove to be a blessing, not only to participants themselves, but to the entire community and the rest of society.

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